

PSINSIDE

www.pittsburghillustrators.org

January, 2010

My Spot by Anni Matsick



The mast-head's change of colors announces the year's first issue, guaranteeing lots of

fresh things inside. Look for reports of unusual work surfaces, including a refrigerator and the human epidermis! Another member's work is part of an exhibit curated in cyberspace.

Our new segment on artistic influences is off to a fascinating start with the promise of many more installments, providing insight on what inspires and informs each of us.

A report on membership status shows that we are securely holding our numbers with more interest gained regularly through word of mouth---maybe yours? Socials begin again this month, a great time to introduce friends to PSI!

Editor: Anni Matsick
Design/Production: Ron Magnes

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News Flashes From Our Members



New Year Cheer

Here is the New Year's card **Pat Lewis** designed for Pittsburgh's Toonseum. **Dave Klug** did last year's design.



Dashing Through the Snow

John Hinderliter got a call from a client one week before Christmas requesting an interactive piece of art for their client by the next day. "I did this in a 22 hour push," he relates. "The email card arrived

with the night scene of the house then the Christmas lights popped up."

Cool Kegerator

New member **Tim Oliveira** was one of eight local artists picked back in September to design/paint "Kegerators" for the third annual *Steel City Big Pour's* auction/raffle. The event is sponsored by Construction Junction, a non-profit retailer promoting conservation through the reuse of building materials. According to Tim, "They give you a white refrigerator and see what you can make of it. Then they add the tap." Tim also created an acrylic painting on paper at the festival's "Live Art" section. More on the event can be found at: www.constructionjunction.org/events



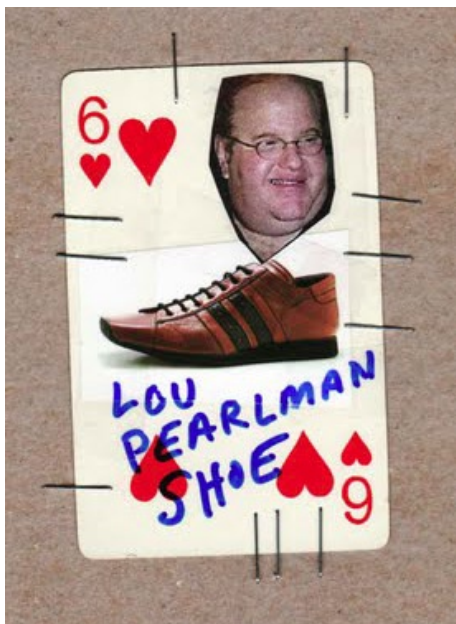
On Exhibit



Works by **LeRoy "King of Art"** are included in two unique group shows opening this month.

FoFb—Found on Facebook Exhibition
Jan 19 – Feb 18
Opening reception Feb 3, 5-8 pm

The Arthur M. Berger Art Gallery presents a very timely collection of art and artists in the exhibition *Found on Facebook*. Having used this social networking site as a reservoir of possibilities, gallery director Charles McGill made virtual "connections" with artists he has never met, conducted virtual "studio visits" and then chose art he has never seen in reality, all within the confines of the Facebook networking site. The show includes artists from Brazil, Greece, California, London, Pittsburgh, Denmark and New York City, to name a few. The Manhattanville College's gallery in Purchase, NY, describes it as an exhibition that reflects the pulse, popularity and energy of the social networking phenomenon. Join the buzz at: www.facebook.com/n/?event.php&eid=247346746265&mid=1b58a39G306338c6G3e8a732G7



The 12th Annual Postcards from the Edge: Benefit Exhibition
January 8-10

Postcards from the Edge is a Visual AIDS benefit show and sale of original, postcard-sized works on paper by established and emerging artists. All works are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. The works are signed on the back and exhibited so the artists' signatures cannot be seen. While buyers receive a list of all participating artists, they don't know who created which piece until purchased. All proceeds support the work of Visual AIDS. The show will hang at the ZieherSmith Gallery, 516 West 20th Street, New York City. More at: www.thebody.com/visualaids/current/postcards2009.html

Place of Honor



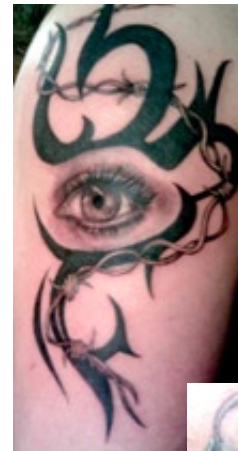
This month we have the image created by **Fred Carlson** for America Magazine that was also purchased by them and framed for presentation to Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams along with their annual Champion Award, given to outstanding Christian scholars. A report herein last month told of his being honored with the commission to illustrate His Grace's award-winning poem. The original will hang in one of his two offices, either Lambeth palace or Westminster Abbey. The illustration and poem appear in the magazine's January issue.

Coverage appeared in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and can be viewed online at www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/ae/museums/s_661153.html

Duly Noted

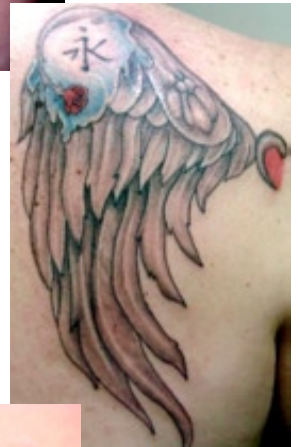
John Manders is included in the 2009 retrospective at Seven Impossible Things blog. <http://blaine.org/sevenimpossiblethings/?p=1862>

Notable Ink



Sarah Miller is working as a tattoo artist at Jester's Court, just voted Pittsburgh's best tattoo parlor by the Pittsburgh City Paper for the tenth consecutive year. In a local tattoo contest sponsored by a Presbyterian church in

Middletown, NY, Sarah's designs took 1st, 2nd and 3rd places. The proceeds went to charity. "I'm beginning to explore tattoos as a new



media by applying oil painting techniques. The layering process helps with building form but you have to be careful not to tear the skin," she says.

"Hopefully, there will be many more contests that I take home awards from!"

Fun Links



NYT Notable 2009 Opinion Art
www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/12/28/opinion/20091228_2009-OPART.html?emc=eta1

Clients from Hell
<http://clientsfromhell.tumblr.com>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Touchstone Lists Members' Offerings

Registration is now open for 2010 at Touchstone Center for Crafts in the Laurel Highlands. Three members are offering classes among the listings found online at: www.touchstonecrafts.org



Bill Vrscak will lead a Spring Drawing Weekend April 23-25, and a Fall Drawing Weekend September 24-26, for those wanting to improve their skills while enjoying the natural, relaxing environment.



Less relaxed is Illustrators Boot Camp, an intensive introduction to illustration for the children's market, offered by **Anni Matsick** June 20-26. Students

will work in traditional mediums to complete four diverse projects.

Daily variety continues with a project per day in **Ron Thurston's** Watercolor: A Painting Adventure, which will take place August 22-28, combining spontaneity with a few basic techniques.

Famous Artist Course Download

Linda Varos found a great resource to fine tune the artistic chops over the winter and get into the heads of some of the best illustrators this country ever produced. Animation student Daniel Caylor has posted PDF's of The Famous Artist Course by Norman Rockwell, Al Dorne, Ben Stahl, Al Parker, etc., circa 1960. This hard to find three book course

is available for download in PDF format free of charge on his blogsite at: <http://onanimation.com/?p=2119>

Caylor says, "The Famous Artist Course I am sharing with you today is the Commercial Art & Illustration course from 1960. The Famous Artist School, founded in 1948 by Al Dorne and Norman Rockwell, released updated editions of this course and other courses (Painting, Cartooning, etc) over the years."

For the founding faculty, Al Dorne recruited John Atherton, Austin Briggs, Stevan Dohanos, Robert Fawcett, Peter Helck, Fred Ludekens, Ben Stahl, Al Parker, Norman Rockwell, Harold von Schmidt and Jon Whitcomb. All were making more than \$50,000 a year at the time, roughly equivalent to \$425,000 in 2006. Later faculty included cartoonists Al Capp, Milt Caniff and Rube Goldberg. Advisory faculty for the school later included Stuart Davis, Ben Shahn, Fletcher Martin, Ernest Fiene, Arnold Blanch and Doris Lee.

Renew Membership Online!

Dues are now payable by credit card or via PayPal on PSI's website. Go direct to dues renewal page: www.pittsburghillustrators.org/duesrenewal.htm

Membership stats from 2009 calendar year:

- PSI received 31 inquiries for new member applications during 2009 and 20 became new members. The earlier trend was about 18-20 inquiries per year and about 30% joining. The 65% response for 2009 is very gratifying--double any previous year.
- Of the 20 new members, 16 were at full professional level and a lot of talent among the 4 affiliate members as well.
- At least 4 of the remaining 11 inquirers are still actively considering membership.
- We lost less than a dozen members due to various factors as their dues lapsed in early 2009, none of the deleted members noting dissatisfaction with the organization.
- Membership currently stands at 145.

Jobs Via PSI Website?

If you've scored an assignment through PSI's website, please alert PSI President **Mark Brewer** at: mark@markbrewer.com

PSI is working on a multi-tier marketing plan for 2010 and it would benefit our analysis reports to know the success of our current efforts.

New Members

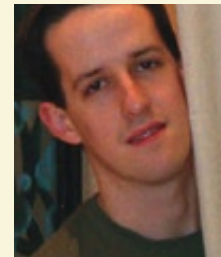


Tim Oliveira

[email](#)
[website](#)

Tim entered the Pittsburgh art scene 15 years ago, specializing in silkscreened

and acrylic paintings. Focusing on clean black lines and bright bold colors, he paints simple pop art/graffiti-like shapes and objects as well as large abstract paintings. His art can be found throughout the city.



Anthony A. Purcell

[email](#)

Anthony is an AIP grad and explored a variety of digital and traditional

styles while taking jobs as illustrator for an invention company, graphic designer and for several mural paintings around the Pittsburgh area. He specializes in portraits, dark fantasy and surrealism, usually in acrylic on both wood and canvas.



Jim Starr

[email](#)
[website](#)

Jim is a 1982 CMU grad who studied with **Fred Carlson** toward a BFA in

Illustration. He had full time Illustration jobs at Pitt Studios then Eucalyptus Tree Studios in Baltimore where a five year experience under seasoned illustrators taught him what it takes to go freelance. He now serves a widespread market from his studio in Stewartstown.

In Touch with...

JAMES MELLETT

Jigsaw enthusiasts get their money's worth in Jim's elaborate theme puzzles. Clients love his rich, painterly style that nails a likeness in confident strokes. Here, he tells about his devotion to career, family and friends.



Q: How would describe your personality and lifestyle?

A: This is a hard question to answer about myself, but I would describe myself as funny, dedicated, loyal, stubborn, and very family oriented. I like to get out with friends, but really find it hard to do lately with two jobs. I try to do my best on any illustration assignment, big or small. I truly love illustration and take great pride in doing my best. I feel like I am very organized, but my studio often gets overrun with mess when I am in the middle of a large puzzle assignment. I am very loyal to my friends and family. Like many artists, I enjoy the solitary time in my studio and many of my hobbies don't involve others either. I do like most people.

Q: Was there a significant turning point or detour in your career?

A: After graduation from IUP (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), I quickly got a

very low paying job at the Graphic Arts Technical Foundation (GATF) which at that time was on Forbes Avenue in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. I started doing production work and soon was allowed to try my hand at designing and an occasional illustration. I was about 24 years old and learning a lot about design, printing, and typesetting. GATF was an educational printer with typesetters, designers, pressman, printing presses, and photographers all in one building. I was able to learn about every level of the industry. It was a hands-on environment. I could go to press checks right down the hall from the design office. If there was a problem with typesetting, they were the next door down. I was able to take classes on pre-press, watch my design jobs on press, and learn every day on the job. At that point in my career it was an incredible learning experience that

has helped me many years down the road.

Q: From what illustration assignment did you learn the most about yourself?

A: Every puzzle that I do for White Mountain Puzzles has its challenges. There are countless hours of research and preliminary sketches that go into each assignment. One puzzle theme in particular was especially challenging. When I was commissioned to do the "Jazz" puzzle art, I was very concerned. I knew very little about jazz music other than a few of the famous names of jazz and a few local artists. After doing my usual research, I completed my rough sketch and thought the hard work was over. Then I realized that the subject matter was much different than what I had illustrated in the past. Although I have done hundreds of small portraits on many puzzles and other illustration assignments, this art was different. The "Jazz" art had many African Americans, men and women, and most

of the reference images were in dark settings with musicians wearing dark suits. I immediately got very concerned that my art would be dark, heavy, and would lack color. I also worried that the resulting finished art would be not up to the standards that the puzzle company usually produces. I really made a conscious effort to add color where all my instincts said not to. I took a lesson from my friend and PSI member, George Gaadt, and placed colors in areas that I normally wouldn't have painted them. I did some small portraits in monochromatic pink, purple, lime green, sepia, and black. The resulting final art was bright and colorful and has become one of my all time favorites. I learned that not only am I capable of working on a subject that I have limited knowledge of, but I was also able to push myself artistically and the finished artwork was one of my best.

Q: What was the most constructive criticism that you ever received?

A: I can't pinpoint a specific situation, but I have always appreciated the advice and critique of my peers. While at IUP, I had a drawing teacher that emphasized the critique as much as the technique. He forced us to evaluate our own work as well as the work of our classmates. I learned that all my art wasn't perfect. I learned to take criticism and learn from it and grow from it. I often send my roughs to friends and fellow artists looking for feedback. PSI member Mark Bender and I have been friends for many years starting back in our days together at IUP. I have often asked Mark to look at sketches and give me suggestions. That kind of honest and helpful review is very beneficial.

Q: Does the artwork you do for yourself differ from the artwork that you do for your clients? If so how?

A: I sometimes feel I am more creative without the constraints of an art director or client. The techniques and style of my art don't change much in my personal artwork. I still work primarily in gouache and colored pencil because that is what I have grown most comfortable with. I feel I'm a little more likely to take chances with color and loosen up in my personal art. I wish I had time to do more art for myself.

Q: Who or what has been the biggest influence on your work?

A: I'm going to go with a what and not a who for this one. I grew up with three brothers. My mother and father were both teachers. Mom and Dad always encouraged me and my love of drawing and painting. They sent me to Tam-O-Shanter art classes at the Carnegie every Saturday morning for many, many years. I'm sure they worried about art as a career, but they supported me wholeheartedly when I decided to go to IUP and pursue my Fine Arts degree. That support has had such a positive influence on my confidence as an artist. My father always encouraged us to do something we loved because it wouldn't seem like work in the end. That kind of support from my parents at a young age, and that same kind of support from my wife and daughter today make this the best job in the world.

Q: What would you do with ten million dollars?

A: Two letters... RV. I have always wanted an RV. I'm not really a car guy so I wouldn't get a fancy car. I would probably move into a bigger house with a big front porch for my wife (she'd be allowed in the rest of the house, too!) I might even let her quit her job. I would buy that RV and travel around to college football games and tailgating. I know...SILLY, but ten million dollars affords you that luxury.

Q: What do you enjoy reading?

A: I don't read a lot, but when I do I enjoy biographies. I like to read about musicians, athletes, and historical figures, and how they got where they are today (or in the past). I usually tend to lean to the sports related biographies.

Q: What one thing would you like to learn to do?

A: I have always wished I knew more about photography. I can play with my digital camera and get lucky occasionally, but I would really like to learn how to use a top quality camera and shoot some of my own ideas for fun.

Q: Share an interesting work related anecdote about a tight deadline, dream assignment, or favorite art director.

A: A number of years ago my wife and I were looking to improve our home and wanted to add a deck to the side of our house. This was going to be a large undertaking because of the way our home is situated on our lot and where the neighbor's property line was located in relation to our plans. Our yard is actually on the side of our home and our neighbor's driveway is in the back of our house. The plan we had for a multi-tiered deck along with the property line restrictions was making this more expensive than we had anticipated. I was nervous about the financial commitment, to say the least, but we decided to move forward. The day the crew started banging holes in the house and digging footers, my phone rang. I actually remember closing the door to my office so I could talk to this new client that called from northern California. They were interested in hiring me to illustrate romaine lettuce, leaf lettuce, head lettuce and carrots for bags of Fresh Express salad. After negotiating for a little bit and getting all the particulars on the assignment, I hung up with the client and quickly called my wife at work. I remember my exact words to her. I said, "I think I just paid for the deck." I painted four illustrations for Fresh Express and after billing for a few changes I had paid for the deck along with sliding doors to access our new deck from the dining room. It was the best single paying job I have ever done. Lettuce? I love bagged lettuce!

Jim's work can be viewed on his website at: www.melart.com

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INFLUENCES

Members reveal sources of inspiration...

I was asked to create drawings in a style similar to Thomas Nast's for a commission I am working on, illustrations for *The Story of the Allegheny Observatory*, a science documentary movie now in production. When the director of the movie, Dan Handley, first contacted me, he emailed a sample of Nast's work saying he was searching for a digital artist who could produce Nast-like nostalgic



© Thomas Nast

newspaper illustrations to go with the historic time frame of the story. For years I have studied and admired the line work of Nast among other similar artists from that time and dreamed of a commission that would require me to work in the same vein, though digitally, and my dream came true. With the assistance of my new 21" Wacom Cintiq, I am now creating line illustrations in this archaic style by drawing with a stylus pen directly onto a monitor screen that sits on an easel – Nast would be amazed! And not only that, I am working directly with the special effects film editor, Bryan Scibelli, who is animating my drawings. So I was chosen for this job not only because of my illustration style but also because I create my drawings in Photoshop which is totally compatible with the film production software. According to Bryan's process, he pushes my Photoshop layers into a composite and uses the negative space to build an alpha channel which allows him to control the falloff of the



Kathy Rooney

layers...any transparency is controlled in the layer options of the composite software (got that?). Included here is my first drawing for the film, *The Donati Comet*

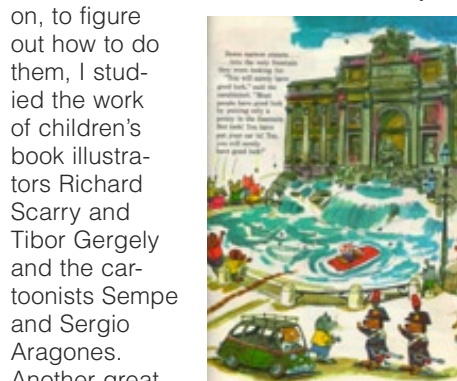
as it appeared over Allegheny City (Pittsburgh's North Side) in 1858.

—Kathy Rooney



David Coulsen

I recently did this cover for *The Link*, Carnegie Mellon University's School of Computer Science magazine, about their new Gates Hillman Center. (The dragon is



© Richard Scarry

the school's mascot). I've been doing these kinds of crowded scenes for so long now that I no longer look at specific illustrators for reference. But early on, to figure out how to do them, I studied the work of children's book illustrators Richard Scarry and Tibor Gergely and the cartoonists Sempe and Sergio Aragones. Another great children's book



© Margaret Bloy Graham

illustrator and a big influence for me is Margaret Bloy Graham. She illustrated the *Harry the Dirty Dog* series, but the one shown is from *Jeffie's Party*.

—David Coulsen

My main influence has been Richard Schmid. After reading and rereading his book *Alla Prima*, I found myself painting portraits 1000% better. He, too, starts out his paintings in a reductive manner, modeling the form of the subject. After struggling all my life trying to get the face right by starting with the outer perimeter, he



© Richard Schmid

showed me to start with the eyes and work my way out. All measurements of the face are based on the measurements of the eyes, guaranteeing that the face will be in perfect proportion when you finish the outer edges. No guessing or redrawing needed.

Also, in his book, he has several examples of monochromatic paintings. These were meant to be underpaintings but



© Richard Schmid

when he saw how beautiful they were he decided they were finished. An exhibit judge once told me that I was very brave painting a portrait of a young child in monochrome. But it is a method I fell in love with and use quite often. I don't think it is brave... but it is now a passion.



Leda Miller

A few years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with Mr. Schmid at his slide presentation at the Butler. He and his wife Nancy are

both accomplished artists who are willing to share all their knowledge, and generously encourage the artists they meet.

Shown are two of my favorite oils of Schmid's, "Molly" and "Nancy at the Beach" and two of my own favorites, "Standing My Ground" and "Giftwrapped".

—Leda Miller

What do you do to kick-start yourself creatively when you're feeling blocked or uninspired?

Sarah Miller: "When I'm feeling blocked or uninspired I usually go to the gym and work off my frustration, then when I get home start looking at art that I admire. It does wonders to change your state of mind from 'I can't' to 'I can.'"

Fred Carlson: "Draw from life quickly and spontaneously, even for half an hour at a time."

I also like to take down all the artwork hanging on my studio walls and rotate up other pieces and influences—this is very important. You have to remind yourself of where you've been and inspire yourself on where you're heading. I think one can be subconsciously lulled into boredom by keeping the same things up for months

and months at a time in your working environment.

Remember what simplicity means for your process. For me, that means going back to my volumes on Vermeer, Holbein, Hopper, Steinberg, Cober and Grant Wood.

I usually do not suggest poring through recent annuals or illustration-only volumes; I think that creates self-consciousness that is defeatist. But in this case, I recently looked at a cool online video about Brad Holland working in his studio that was just wonderful. Thanks to Joe Fiedler for sending it to me—it was very inspiring. Warning to neat freaks: note the palette..."

richardsolomon.com/confab/2009/02/09/brad-holland-talks-about-his-work/

Ilene Winn-Lederer: "Among many ways are the following:

1. Visit my personal library, choose a book at random and open a random page. I also like flipping through the dictionary to see what word(s) leap out at me.
2. Revisit my portfolio and/or resumé to regain some perspective on what I've accomplished in the past.

3. Take a walk or check out a local gallery show or museum.

4. Google my way through what's new in illustration."

Joe Winkler: "I fix myself a big bowl of Cocoa Pebbles and pop in the DVD Simon Schama's Power of Art."

Rick Antolic: "When I get a creative block, which happens more often than what I'd like to admit, I find that going for a long, brisk walk or a light jog will help to clear my mind of many of the obstacles that it contains and then I can begin thinking a bit more clearly. Then some solutions begin to present themselves. I love taking walks, but hate to jog. I am also very lazy. If it weren't for so many creative blocks, I'd probably weigh 400 pounds with all the junk food I eat."

Thanks to Craig Mrusek for this month's question. Got a good question for an upcoming issue? Please submit to: animatsick@mac.com

Personals

Ron Thurston sent these remarks on the recent passing of renowned Pittsburgh painter Nat Youngblood, at age 92: "Nat had done some very



strong water-colors, even better than the

historical oils. Ever since he juried our National Aqueous Open 14 years ago I have been sending him the catalogs year after year. So I got to know Nat and his wife, Sandy, for just a little bit. He was painting right up to the end, limited to about an hour a day due to a bad back. Nat sent me this recent image so I don't think he would mind my sharing it here. I believe many people became artists because of his Sunday Pittsburgh Roto illustrations."

An obituary appears at: www.post-gazette.com/pg/09356/1022697-122.stm

New and improved creative art buyers list!

Only to PSI members!

The latest database is available for only 10 cents per peel-and-stick label!

Custom searches allow you to purchase specific company types, job titles, specialties and locations.

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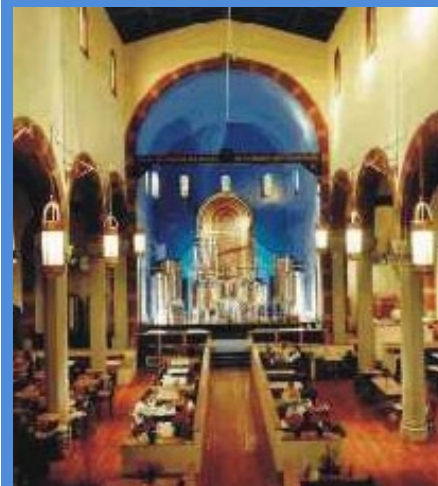
Business Meeting

Come Out, Get Involved, Be Inspired!

Upcoming Business Meeting

January 19 and February 16
7:30 pm at John Blumen's home

Join the Congregation!



Last-Friday-of-the-month gatherings, beginning 8 pm with FREE appetizers!

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BEHIND THE BRUSH

See what members are working on this month...



Rachel Arnold Sager just completed a year-long blog project of completing one personal illustration per week for 2009 at <http://52ills.com>. 52 weeks = 52 illustrations, mission accomplished!

This illustration by **Taylor Callery** was done for The Washington Post. "It is basically a calendar of events over the next three months," he adds.



This is the first in a series of illustrations by **Steve Cup** based on a legend of a man born with a second face on the back of his head which speaks to him and drives him insane.

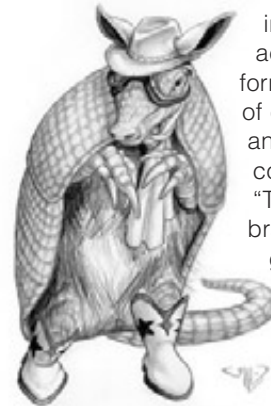
This the first in a series of newsletter cover images **Rick Antolic** is doing for Soergel Orchards in Wexford, PA. They won't be used as covers, but sold as prints and postcard collector items to their customers. Their customer base is about 600,000 annually.



"New Beginnings" by **Mark Brewer** was done for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.



The folks at The Gamers Realm asked **Rhonda Libbey** to help on their "Dr. Ferretstein" project. This involves bring-



ing to life ten characters in sketch form (three views of each character), and three finished color images. "They intend to brand their retail game store with these characters, and I believe use

them as inspiration and illustration in stories later on," Rhonda says. The characters interact with humans in a Steampunk (fantasy/sci-fi) world. The client has also requested additional sepia tone and full color images and an oil painting that will fit a 4' x 9' space.



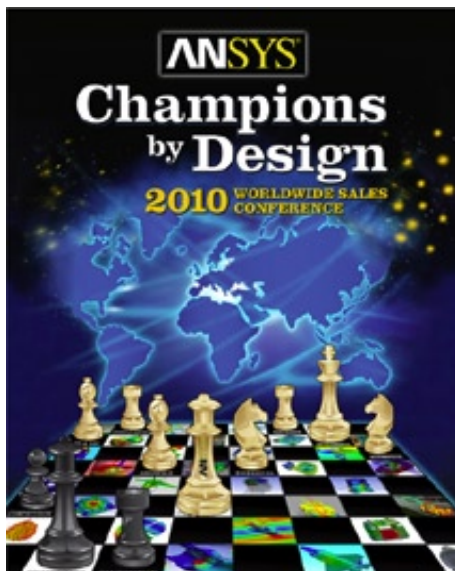
Joe Winkler is finishing this 18x24 inch oil on canvas and doesn't have a title yet. "Going to enter it in some shows this year," he says.



"Ye Olde Coote" illustration was done by **John Hinderliter** while experimenting with the new ArtRage3 program. "ArtRage3 has the best digital watercolor brush I've ever used," John says. "I wound up selling this piece to a bicycle magazine."



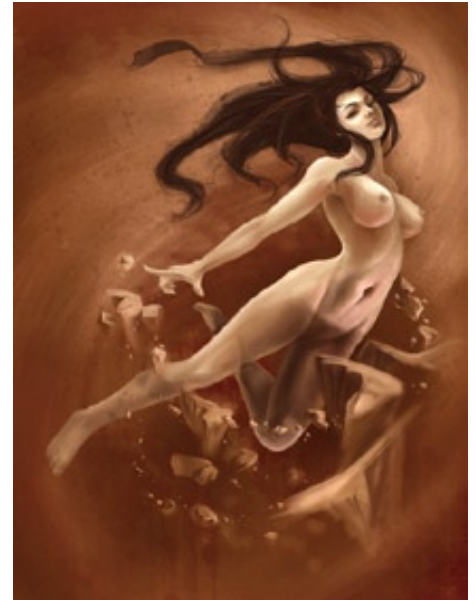
This illustration by **Dan Hart** for ANSYS, Inc. is being used as a large poster/banner and is worked into all web and printed material for the ANSYS 2010 Sales Conference held at Nemacolin Resort in late January. The sales theme is "Champions by Design". The illustration was created in Adobe Illustrator and then Photoshop.



This print of Evgeni Malkin is the first in a series of Penguins prints **Ron Mahoney** plans to produce for the Heinz History Center.



Sarah Miller created this painting in her "off-time".



Here's the rough sketch for **Jim Mellett's** "Sports Legends" puzzle art for White Mountain Puzzles. "I always try to put a Pittsburgh and Western PA spin if I can," Jim says. "So far I have included Johnny Unitas, Dan Marino, Tony Dorsett, Mike Ditka, Arnold Palmer, Joe Montana, Stan Musial, and Joe Namath (just his Alabama helmet). I also have Joe Greene, Roberto Clemente, Mario Lemieux, and Joe Paterno. I may try to add more as I fill in holes in the layout and move things around."

